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WPost

Post-Cold War Thinking: 76 Odorless Restrooms

■ Who says this country's spying agencies are incapable of reordering priorities and accomplishing great things in the new post-Cold War era?

The supersecret National Security Agency, which handles things like spy satellites and electronic eavesdropping, is clearly up to the challenge.

Back in December 1993, the NSA Newsletter "Action Line" was fielding angry complaints from staff about poor ventilation in the bathrooms. An effort to use room "fresheners," one worker said, only made one bathroom "smell like a cheap bar restroom."

But the January 1995 newsletter proudly announced that the 76 bathrooms in Operations Building 1 have been renovated for "increased usability."

Each newsletter, by the way, carries the following warning: *"Because the newsletter contains information about NSA employees and activities which has not been made available to the general public, reasonable care must be taken to keep it within the circle of agency employees, retirees, and immediate families. Newsletter copies received in the mail or taken from agency buildings should be given special care and should be destroyed as soon as they have been read."*

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